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ABSTRACT

Climate surveys are an important diagnostic tool in organization development. The purposes of this paper are to: (1) present the advantages and disadvantages of using a survey as a diagnostic tool, as compared to interviewing, observation, and the use of secondary (preexisting and non-intrusive) information; (2) argue for customized climate surveys rather than standardized ones; (3) provide a rationale for the format to be used in constructing a climate survey; (4) provide an extensive set of questions from which individuals can construct a climate survey; and (5) suggest options for analyzing climate surveys and presenting the results. A sample climate survey for employees is provided, which assesses the corporate and department management's leadership, effectiveness and fairness of the immediate supervisor, interpersonal and interdepartmental relationships, productivity and accountability, communications, employee career development, training and development provisions, job satisfaction, organizational mission and goals, working conditions, employee compensation, and training options desired by employees within their respective companies. (TJH)

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TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CENTER

Project Number Twenty-Six

CONSTRUCTION AND ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATION CLIMATE SURVEYS

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Construction and Analysis of Organization Climate Surveys

Climate surveys are an important diagnostic tool in organization development. While interviewing is the "most popular technique for data collection in organization development practice" (Burke, 1982, p. 200), the other common diagnostic tool used in organizations is the questionnaire or survey approach. When used as a determination of the broad perspective of an organization, it is often referred to as a climate survey.

Rosen (1987, p. 50) has identified several reasons for conducting a climate survey:

* to assess the organization's internal employee relations climate and monitor the trends.
* to identify emerging or existing attitudinal issues before they become explosive.
* to provide feedback to managers on how well they are balancing their various managerial and supervisory responsibilities.
* to build a data base that can inform the organization of the content and processes of selecting, developing and training managers.
* to assist in the design and modification of personnel policies, management systems, and decision-making processes, thereby improving overall organizational effectiveness.
* to provide a way to assess progress during periods of change.
* to identify the parts of the organization that are experiencing pain and need help.
* to provide a safety valve for excess "steam."

The purpose of this paper is: (a) to present the advantages and disadvantages of using a survey as a diagnostic tool; (b) to argue for customized climate surveys rather than standardized ones; (c) to provide a rationale for the format to be used in constructing a climate survey; (d) to provide an extensive set of questions from which individuals can draw to construct a climate survey; and (e) to suggest options for analyzing climate surveys and presenting the results.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Climate Surveys

The four tools of organizational diagnosis are interviewing, questionnaires, observation, and secondary (pre-existing or non-intrusive) information. The advantages and disadvantages of using questionnaires, as compared with the other three methods, are presented in this section.

Advantages

The survey approach has the following advantages over other diagnostic approaches:

1) Especially if standardized instruments are used, or after the first series of administrations, questionnaires tend to be less costly than interviewing because of the ease of administration and analysis, and because training of interviewers or observers is not needed.

2) Although every diagnostic tool has researcher bias built in, the closed portion of a questionnaire (that is, other than the open-ended questions often included in a questionnaire) at least holds the bias constant across all respondents.

3) Results can be analyzed and summarized by someone other than the researcher.

4) From analysis to analysis, the instrument can be held constant, and comparisons can be made to determine changes that are occurring within the organization.

5) Quantitative analysis can be completed quickly, especially if predesigned to facilitate the process.

6) Unlike the interviewing process, which is often spread out in time, questionnaires provide input from everyone at a fixed point in time, especially if the administration of the survey takes place on site on the same day or two.

7) Confidentiality can be assured if no codes or other identifying demographics are collected.

Disadvantages

The disadvantages of the survey method include:

1) It is very difficult to develop a questionnaire that communicates clearly with a vocabulary that is understood by all respondents.

2) It is also difficult to construct a questionnaire that is relatively free of biases.

3) Respondents often find it much easier to talk than to write; therefore, a survey diagnosis may limit the amount of information obtained from respondents.

4) There is a danger that the responses to a survey will be interpreted as "fixed" or static when the variable under investigation may be fluid or dynamic.

5) In an organization where there is considerable mistrust, employees may be uncomfortable putting honest feelings into writing, even though confidentiality is promised. Some organizations have used unethical means to identify respondents.

6) It is difficult (or even impossible) to build relationships between the respondents and the researcher, a task that is much more easily done in interviewing.

7) When administration of the survey is not done on site, there will be nonrespondent bias, unless extra effort is given to insuring a high response rate.

8) Establishing the reliability and validity of a survey can be time-consuming, costly, and difficult.

9) Synthesizing open-ended questions can be very time-consuming and, therefore, expensive.

Customized and Standardized Climate Surveys

A customized survey is one that is written for a specific organization; a standardized instrument is one that does not change from organization to organization or from administration to administration. On balance, a customized survey appears to be preferable to a standardized survey--thus supporting the purpose of this paper. The advantages of each will be presented in this section.

Advantages of Customized Climate Surveys

The advantages of a customized survey include:

1) The client organization can choose the depth and breadth of penetration of a survey. It can choose to survey a single issue or several issues with a high degree of concurrence (permitting a short survey), or it can choose to survey multiple issues with a high degree of disagreement (requiring a long survey). New categories can be developed; items can be drawn from an existing data bank of items (such as included in this report) and combined with new items; and items or item order can be modified easily.

2) The survey can be written using the organizational structure and vocabulary of the client organization to improve understanding and relevance.

3) The questions/statements have greater validity because they are written specifically to the needs of the client organization without the ambiquity of generic questions/statements.

4) Emphasis is on the strengths and opportunities within the client organization rather than on the largely irrelevant focus of normative organizations. Norms can be provided for some items drawn from the existing data bank of items, though such data may deflect from the much more important questions of internal comparisons. What is important is how the client organization can improve--as W. Edwards Deming (1982) emphasizes, looking for "continuous improvement." It really does not matter how well other organizations are doing, especially if they are not competitors. The items of greatest need within the client organization should be the focus, regardless of how the organization compares with others.

5) Client organization managers and employees have greater ownership and less defensiveness if they are involved in the development of the survey instrument.

6) Greater manager/employee involvement creates, in itself, the potential for a positive organization development intervention through team building, problem solving, collaborative groups, and so on.

7) The client organization determines the demographic variables relevant to its needs and interests; superfluous data are not gathered.

8) The interview phase required to determine the relevant questions to include provides a context and "stories" within which to make sense of the quantitative data gathered.

Advantages of Standardized Climate Surveys

On the other hand, there are advantages to standardized surveys. These include:

1) Such surveys cost less. Since there is no need to interview to develop survey categories and items, and since computer analysis programs are standard, time is saved and the cost is less. In fact, choosing to use a standardized survey could preclude the need for a consultant/researcher. In most companies, expertise for administering a standardized survey exists internally, and the test providers will often do computer analysis and report preparation.

2) Standardized surveys are likely to have greater reliability since the same test items are used each time--though appropriate pilot testing with a customized instrument will produce comparable reliability.

3) Standardized surveys provide faster turnaround time. The survey can be administered almost immediately, with results available in a relatively short time.

4) Comparisons with other organizations are available through item and category norms.

5) Standardized surveys tend to be typeset and printed. Customized instruments could be, as well, but this practice may not be cost-effective for the gain in aesthetics.

Constructing a Climate Survey

The following climate survey was constructed using a set of process and format expectations. These expectations, with rationale, are presented below.

1) Before constructing a climate survey, the purpose of the questionnaire should be defined clearly.

2) Generally, the scope of the questionnaire should be limited so that it can be completed within 30 minutes or less, recognizing the variance in reading and completion rates that will exist.

3) Ideally, before developing a climate survey, the other three modes of diagnosis (interviews, observation, and secondary information) should be undertaken.

4) Each item included in the questionnaire must be there for a specific purpose.

5) A pilot study should be completed with a small sample of employees prior to full-scale administration. Responses should be checked to identify where misunderstandings might exist. Those completing the pilot questionnaire should be asked where they encountered difficulties or where the vocabulary used might be at a level that is too difficult for respondents to understand.

6) The orientation ("polarity") of questions should be randomly changed to avoid "halo" effect. When the "desired" response is always "strongly agree" or "strongly disagree," it is difficult to get good information. If a respondent generally feels good about an organization, he or she is likely to pay less attention to individual questions and to answer all of them positively. Likewise, if there is a negative perspective about the organization, all questions are likely to be answered negatively, even though the respondent may not actually feel negative about each question. Using random, reversed polarities forces respondents to read each item.

7) Items that fit within the same category should be interspersed randomly to reduce "halo" effect. Many standardized surveys group items within a category, sometimes even providing a heading. The difficulty is that respondents, seeing a category headed "Supervisor Effectiveness," are likely to respond to all such questions as they feel about their supervisor, rather than item by item.

8) The questionnaire should be as easy to use as possible; sufficient white space should be used; the questionnaire should be typeset or "desk-top published"; full-size print should be used; and so on.

9) If open-ended questions are used (and almost always at least a few questions should be, for highly verbal respondents), adequate space should be left. Provision should be made for respondents to provide open-ended responses to any of the questions.

10) A decision needs to be made as to whether respondents will be forced to take a position (thus using an even number of response options) or whether a neutral position will be permitted (thus using an odd number of response options with a neutral midpoint of "undecided," "don't know," or "no opinion"). The major argument for an odd number is that respondents may legitimately not have an opinion or sufficient information about an item to respond. Forcing them to respond to an even number of options may provide unreliable or invalid data. Further, the objective of the survey is to identify those items that are organizational strengths or weaknesses, and only a small number can be dealt with at one time. Those items will be identified with an odd number of options. On the other hand, with an even number of options, respondents are forced to take a position and cannot avoid searching for their opinion by "hiding" in the "undecided" category.

11) Another decision to be made is the number of options to be provided. Assuming that an odd number of response options is to be used, a 3-, 5-, 7-, or 9-point scale can be used. A 3-point scale does not usually provide enough options to satisy most respondents. A 9-point scale is usually too complex for respondents to discriminate among the response options. Either a 5- or a 7-point scale is acceptable. However, the tendency among most test users who use a 7-point scale is to "collapse" the scale (i.e., treating 1 s and 2 s as one category and 6 s and 7 s as another category, effectively providing a 5-point scale) in reporting the results so they are more manageable. Collapsing the scales, however, destroys the purpose for using the 7-point scales and negatively influences the validity of the results.

12) Some users will prefer to use empty boxes or blanks here rather than specific numbers. When reversed polarities are used, and only blanks or boxes are used for responses, interpreting the results can be very confusing. On the other hand, if numbers are used, as in the example, interpretation is much easier, but the knowledgeable test-taker can quickly figure out which responses are desired.

13) The items should be reliable. There are a number of ways of doing this statistically. Within a small group of employees, response stability can be determined with a second administration of the test after a time lapse of one or two weeks. However, stability will not be present if something significant happens within the organization between test administrations. Another way to determine reliability is through computing Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951), an internal measure of reliability often provided in standard computer statistical packages.

14) The instrument must be valid. Validity is also difficult to determine. Perhaps the best available way to determine validity is to submit the survey to an internal group of people representing a vertical slice of the organization. Their responsibility is to insure that appropriate organizational vocabulary has been used, that the questions address the appropriate issues, and so on.

15) If sampling is to be used, the population from which the sample is to be selected must be clearly defined. The results should not be generalized beyond the defined population.

16) Anonymity must be guaranteed to respondents. Demographic data should not be able to identify unique pockets within the organization, e.g., a woman manager in Department X between ages 40 and 50 who has 20 years of experience with the company.

17) A cover letter (if the questionnaire is distributed by mail) or a personal orientation (if distributed in person) should be used to indicate: the objectives, why the respondents should cooperate, approximately how long the survey will take, and what will be done with the results.

Climate Survey Questions

On the following pages is a "sample" climate survey. The sample provided has an extensive set of questions--probably more than would be used in a single climate survey. Readers are invited to select questions that meet their needs in putting together a climate survey for their organization. Following the survey itself is a summary page that indicates the category in which each survey question falls.

Sample Climate Survey*

XYZ COMPANY EMPLOYEE SURVEY

The purpose of this survey is to determine the attitudes and opinions of employees toward their jobs and XYZ Company. It is important, therefore, that you respond honestly to the items in this questionnaire. All information will be held in strict confidence. Only the outside consultant will have access to the individual questionnaires. All results will be shared with you and with senior management in summary form only. No analysis will be undertaken using the following personal information if that information could be used to identify an individual. Further, no codes have been used to identify individual questionnaires. We appreciate your assistance in providing the information requested.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Your Department:
(circle)

Product X
Product Y
Product Z
Corporate Administration (Treasury, Corporate Controller, International, Purchasing, Legal)
Corporate Research and Development
Corporate Human Resources/Office Services
Corporate Services and Planning

NOTE: Whenever reference is made to "your department" in the survey, respond according to the area you have circled above.

Your Job Grade Level:
(circle)

3-5
6-7
8-10
11-13
14-16
17-19
20 and above
I'm not sure

Sex:
(circle)

Female
Male

Your Primary Location:
(circle)

Location A
Location B
Location C

How long have you been with the company?
(circle)

0-2 years
3-8 years
9-14 years
15 years or more

*All company identifying labels have been replaced with generic labels.

DEFINITIONS - The following words are used throughout the survey and are defined below so that all employees will interpret their meaning in the same way.

Supervisor - The person who has direct responsibility in the organization for monitoring your work performance.

Corporate Management - Questions referring to "corporate management" relate to A*, President, and the staff:

B, VP, Product X
C, VP, Product Y
D, Sr. VP, Product Z
E, VP, Corporate Administration
F, Sr. VP, Human Resources
G, Sr. VP, Corporate Services
H, Sr. VP, Corporate Planning & Development

Department Management - Questions referring to "department management" relate to the vice president and the immediate staff who make the major decisions for their department:

Product X, B
Product Y, C
Product Z, D
Corporate Administration, E
Corporate Human Resources/Office Services, F
Corporate Services and Planning, G or H
Corporate Research and Development, I

---

*The letters here would be replaced by the name of the person with this position.

EMPLOYEE QUESTIONS

Read each of the following statements carefully. Circle the number under the column which best describes how you feel about the statement. If you wish to make any comments on any item, place the number of that item on the blank page accompanying the survey, followed by your comments. If you have no knowledge about the item, so cannot provide an answer, do not respond to that item.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	I am doing something really worthwhile on my job.	5	4	3	2	1
2.	XYZ Company employees get along well together.	5	4	3	2	1
3.	My supervisor is often unfair with employees.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	XYZ Company makes too many changes too quickly, causing me to wonder if the company's goals are clear.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	A job description exists for my position.	5	4	3	2	1
6.	Employees are still identified by the company for which they were working prior to the merger of that company with XYZ Company, e.g., Company A, Company B, XYZ Company.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	My department's management is interested in the well-being of the company's employees.	5	4	3	2	1
8.	My job is frequently dull and monotonous.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I am familiar with the existing Human Resources policies and procedures.	5	4	3	2	1
10.	I can usually talk with my supervisor as often as I need.	5	4	3	2	1
11.	I often think my job contributes little to the company.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I am usually given credit for work well done.	5	4	3	2	1
13.	I want to continue to work for the company as long as I can.	5	4	3	2	1
14.	I have little opportunity to use my abilities in my present job.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	There are too many cliques or small departments among employees creating an unfriendly atmosphere.	1	2	3	4	5

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
16.	Corporate management is interested in the well-being of employees.	5	4	3	2	1
17.	New employees are given a clear understanding of XYZ Company in the orientation session.	5	4	3	2	1
18.	Supervisors do not cooperate with each other.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	It is difficult to understand the benefits available to employees.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	My supervisor tries to get my ideas before decisions are finalized.	5	4	3	2	1
21.	Profitability is an important goal for XYZ Company.	5	4	3	2	1
22.	The company's employee benefits fit my needs.	5	4	3	2	1
23.	Corporate management is generally respected by employees.	5	4	3	2	1
24.	Sometimes my supervisor seems to understand little about my job.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	Within the company there are good opportunities for those who do a good job.	5	4	3	2	1
26.	The decisions made by corporate management are usually good business decisions.	5	4	3	2	1
27.	Not much effort is made to get the opinions and thinking of employees.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	I do not understand how my performance on the job is evaluated.	1	2	3	4	5
29.	Employees in the company work efficiently.	5	4	3	2	1
30.	My supervisor does a good job of building teamwork within our work department.	5	4	3	2	1
31.	Honestly expressing my opinion will likely create problems for me in the company.	1	2	3	4	5
32.	I think my performance is judged fairly.	5	4	3	2	1
33.	I have a clear idea of the results expected of me on the job.	5	4	3	2	1

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
34.	The quality of work done in our department is excellent.	5	4	3	2	1
35.	Many of the employees with whom I work directly are not committed to the mission of XYZ Company.	1	2	3	4	5
36.	I frequently fail to get the information I need to do a good job.	1	2	3	4	5
37.	Adequate information is available about the planning being done in the company.	5	4	3	2	1
38.	The company's day-to-day operations are consistent with its mission.	5	4	3	2	1
39.	There are too many unnecessary procedures which keep me from doing my work as well as I would like.	1	2	3	4	5
40.	The workload is too heavy most of the time.	1	2	3	4	5
41.	So long as employees in our department are performing their jobs well, department management seldom interferes.	5	4	3	2	1
42.	I seldom get the help I need in training seminars to improve my performance on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
43.	The Human Resources policies of the company are fair and reasonable.	5	4	3	2	1
44.	Corporate management makes good decisions on how the company's money is spent.	5	4	3	2	1
45.	I often think that what our department management tells us is not true.	1	2	3	4	5
46.	Many employees here have poor attitudes toward their job.	1	2	3	4	5
47.	Our department management manages effectively.	5	4	3	2	1
48.	My supervisor helps me solve problems that occur on my job.	5	4	3	2	1
49.	I feel free to recommend improvements to my supervisor.	5	4	3	2	1

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
50.	We usually hear about important decisions or actions first through the grapevine.	1	2	3	4	5
51.	I am familiar with the company's mission statement.	5	4	3	2	1
52.	Work is distributed fairly among the employees.	5	4	3	2	1
53.	The equipment with which I work is efficient.	5	4	3	2	1
54.	False rumors are heard frequently.	1	2	3	4	5
55.	There is too much waste of materials and supplies here.	1	2	3	4	5
56.	My department management team is generally respected by employees.	5	4	3	2	1
57.	The employees in the company generally put in a full day's work.	5	4	3	2	1
58.	My department's managers work hard for the objectives of XYZ Company.	5	4	3	2	1
59.	I can talk with my supervisor about any concerns or suggestions that I might have.	5	4	3	2	1
60.	My supervisor is respected by employees in the company.	5	4	3	2	1
61.	I am not encouraged to develop new skills that might lead to a better job.	1	2	3	4	5
62.	Employees frequently take long lunch hours.	1	2	3	4	5
63.	The company is too slow in adjusting its business direction.	1	2	3	4	5
64.	I prefer the company's mission and goals to those found in most other companies.	5	4	3	2	1
65.	My supervisor is the best qualified person for that position.	5	4	3	2	1
66.	Too much time is wasted by employees in the company.	1	2	3	4	5
67.	Important objectives are often compromised or ignored in decisions made in the company.	1	2	3	4	5

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
68.	Corporate managers generally understand the problems and needs of the company.	5	4	3	2	1
69.	I feel confident that employee benefits will continue to change to meet my needs.	5	4	3	2	1
70.	My supervisor handles employee conflicts effectively.	5	4	3	2	1
71.	Men and women are not given an equal opportunity of being hired by the company.	1	2	3	4	5
72.	My supervisor usually makes clear-cut decisions so we know where we stand.	5	4	3	2	1
73.	The company does not demonstrate sufficient concern for its stockholders.	1	2	3	4	5
74.	Employees frequently arrive late for work.	1	2	3	4	5
75.	Some employees waste too much time with personal visiting.	1	2	3	4	5
76.	From what I hear, our benefits are as good as those of employees in other companies like this one.	5	4	3	2	1
77.	Morale in the company is high.	5	4	3	2	1
78.	Usually nothing happens when I make suggestions to my supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
79.	Policy changes are clearly communicated.	5	4	3	2	1
80.	The employee evaluation and review process is helpful in improving my performance.	5	4	3	2	1
81.	Minorities are given an equal chance of being hired by the company.	5	4	3	2	1
82.	Participating in a training seminar within the company has helped me to be more productive.	5	4	3	2	1
83.	The company usually offers vacancies to qualified people from within before hiring outsiders.	5	4	3	2	1
84.	My department management appears to administer policies consistently.	5	4	3	2	1

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
85.	I think the company is highly respected in the business community.	5	4	3	2	1
86.	The most qualified people appear to be the ones who receive promotions.	5	4	3	2	1
87.	I am never asked to do anything that I consider to be unethical.	5	4	3	2	1
88.	If I have a complaint, and I disagree with my supervisor's decision, I can get a review of my complaint by his or her supervisor.	5	4	3	2	1
89.	Employees are given adequate opportunity for input into deciding what training is to be made available.	5	4	3	2	1
90.	New employees are given adequate time to learn procedures before they are expected to use those procedures.	5	4	3	2	1
91.	The decisions made by my department's management are usually good business decisions.	5	4	3	2	1
92.	I think corporate management will act on most of the issues brought to its attention through this survey.	5	4	3	2	1
93.	I am frequently worried about my job security because the goals of the company are not being accomplished.	1	2	3	4	5
94.	I am proud of my job because of the image of XYZ Company.	5	4	3	2	1
95.	The current growth rate of XYZ Company is adequate.	5	4	3	2	1
96.	Service to our customers is an important company objective.	5	4	3	2	1
97.	I frequently worry about the future of XYZ Company.	1	2	3	4	5
98.	Men and women are given an equal opportunity of being promoted.	5	4	3	2	1
99.	The physical environment in which I work is a pleasant one.	5	4	3	2	1
100.	My supervisor often seems to waste his or her time.	1	2	3	4	5

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
101.	The training that I have received at XYZ Company has created promotion opportunities for me.	5	4	3	2	1
102.	Sexual harassment is not a problem in the company.	5	4	3	2	1
103.	So far as I know, men and women are paid equally in the company when they perform the same job.	5	4	3	2	1
104.	Corporate management makes decisions on a timely basis.	5	4	3	2	1
105.	I know how my grade level assignment was determined.	5	4	3	2	1
106.	The employee meetings, with an opportunity to raise questions of the president, are helpful.	5	4	3	2	1
107.	My supervisor often interferes unnecessarily with decisions that I have made.	1	2	3	4	5
108.	Many unhealthy conflicts exist in the company because of differences among departments.	1	2	3	4	5
109.	The company has too many supervisors.	1	2	3	4	5
110.	Our employees often help each other with their work when workloads permit.	5	4	3	2	1
111.	Most of my department's senior managers know who I am.	5	4	3	2	1
112.	Supervisors here are able to change their leadership style to meet specific needs.	5	4	3	2	1
113.	Most of my department's senior managers are interested in my personal welfare.	5	4	3	2	1
114.	I receive feedback on my performance as frequently as needed.	5	4	3	2	1
115.	Employees generally do not go over their supervisor to get a different decision from their supervisor's supervisor.	5	4	3	2	1
116.	Training opportunities available within XYZ Company are appropriate for my needs.	5	4	3	2	1
117.	My grade level assignment is appropriate for the kind of work I do.	5	4	3	2	1

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
118.	Job posting does not work well in informing me of job openings within the company for which I might be qualified and interested.	1	2	3	4	5
119.	When I make a mistake, I am corrected constructively.	5	4	3	2	1
120.	Written communications within the company are well-written.	5	4	3	2	1
121.	Corporate management is not as visible as I would like.	1	2	3	4	5
122.	My supervisor has talked with me concretely about plans for my future within the company.	5	4	3	2	1
123.	My job objectives encourage me to be as productive as possible.	5	4	3	2	1
124.	Something shared in confidence with my supervisor will remain confidential.	5	4	3	2	1
125.	My job contains enough variety.	5	4	3	2	1
126.	Timely communication among employees is the exception rather than the rule.	1	2	3	4	5
127.	Procedures for doing my job are clearly written.	5	4	3	2	1
128.	Evidence is available that corporate management is involved in long-range planning.	5	4	3	2	1
129.	My department management is well-informed about the broad activities of XYZ Company.	5	4	3	2	1
130.	Corporate management represents the company well in public.	5	4	3	2	1
131.	I know the contributions of the other departments to the overall operation of XYZ Company.	5	4	3	2	1
132.	I have considered moving to another company because the promotion potential within XYZ Company is so limited.	1	2	3	4	5
133.	I generally understand the responsibilities of key personnel within the company.	5	4	3	2	1

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
134.	If I request it, my supervisor will give me additional responsibilities to broaden my work experiences.	5	4	3	2	1
135.	I usually know where I stand with my supervisor.	5	4	3	2	1
136.	I am rewarded for good results obtained in my position.	5	4	3	2	1
137.	My supervisor makes decisions on a timely basis.	5	4	3	2	1
138.	The company newsletter is an important source of information.	5	4	3	2	1
139.	My department managers often seem to waste their time.	1	2	3	4	5
140.	I would consider a horizontal job transfer (at the same grade level), if requested, so that I could learn new job skills and have more job variety.	5	4	3	2	1
141.	The financial losses in some departments keep other departments from reaching their goals.	1	2	3	4	5
142.	Separate facilities in the three locations do not interfere with a sense of unity among departments.	5	4	3	2	1
143.	I often think that what corporate management tells us is not true.	1	2	3	4	5
144.	The quality of the instruction in the training seminars is high.	5	4	3	2	1
145.	Procedures for doing my job are readily available.	5	4	3	2	1
146.	I am held accountable for the results I obtain in my position.	5	4	3	2	1
147.	XYZ Company is too decentralized; more decisions need to be made at the corporate level rather than the department level.	1	2	3	4	5
148.	I would support having a smoke-free environment at our facility.	5	4	3	2	1
149.	I would be interested in a temporary job exchange with a worker in another division/department to broaden my perspective of XYZ Company.	5	4	3	2	1

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
150.	Pay increases are based upon my personal accomplishments on the job.	5	4	3	2	1
151.	My supervisor does not encourage me to take advantage of the training opportunities available to me.	1	2	3	4	5
152.	There are appropriate role models for me at XYZ Company.	5	4	3	2	1
153.	The XYZ Company's pay program is fair.	5	4	3	2	1
154.	Ultimately I am responsible for my own career development.	5	4	3	2	1
155.	XYZ Company encourages employee involvement in the community through company-sponsored events and volunteer programs.	5	4	3	2	1
156.	My pay is not reasonable for the position I hold.	1	2	3	4	5

(PLEASE CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE.)

What is your opinion of--	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
157. ... the noise level in your work area?	5	4	3	2	1
158. ... the cafeteria facilities?	5	4	3	2	1
159. ... the length of the coffee breaks?	5	4	3	2	1
160. ... your working hours?	5	4	3	2	1
161. ... the availability of necessary supplies?	5	4	3	2	1
162. ... the availability of necessary equipment?	5	4	3	2	1
163. ... the safety conditions in your work area?	5	4	3	2	1
164. ... the comfort level in your work area?	5	4	3	2	1
165. ... the personal days program?	5	4	3	2	1
166. ... the personal days allowed?	5	4	3	2	1
167. ... the number of holidays observed?	5	4	3	2	1
168. ... the medical insurance plan(s)?	5	4	3	2	1
169. ... the Employee Relations Committee?	5	4	3	2	1
170. ... the retirement plan?	5	4	3	2	1
171. ... the adequacy of the pay you receive?	5	4	3	2	1
172. ... the length of the lunch break?	5	4	3	2	1
173. ... the tuition reimbursement policy?	5	4	3	2	1
174. ... the disability leave policy?	5	4	3	2	1
175. ... the savings plan?	5	4	3	2	1
176. ... the Employee Assistance Program?	5	4	3	2	1
177. ... the flextime (or flexible working hours) policy?	5	4	3	2	1

If offered, what is the likelihood that you would participate in the following* workshops?	Very Likely	Likely	Not Sure	Not Likely	Not At All Likely
178. Orientation to the company (policies, structure, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
179. Orientation to your department	5	4	3	2	1
180. Stress Management	5	4	3	2	1
181. Time Management	5	4	3	2	1
182. Managing Conflict	5	4	3	2	1
183. Automated Office	5	4	3	2	1
184. Microcomputer Applications	5	4	3	2	1
185. Interpersonal Communications (2-way)	5	4	3	2	1
186. General Office Procedures	5	4	3	2	1
187. Supervisory Skills	5	4	3	2	1
188. Assertiveness	5	4	3	2	1
189. Report Writing	5	4	3	2	1
190. Career Development	5	4	3	2	1
191. Long-Range/Strategic Planning	5	4	3	2	1
192. Problem-Solving	5	4	3	2	1
193. Leadership Styles	5	4	3	2	1
194. Team Building Skills	5	4	3	2	1
195. Labor Negotiations	5	4	3	2	1
196. Math Review	5	4	3	2	1
197. English Review	5	4	3	2	1

*This list is not an exhaustive one. It should include as many possible course titles as might be feasible to offer in the organization.

		Very Likely	Likely	Not Sure	Not Likely	Not At All Likely
198.	Effective Reading	5	4	3	2	1
199.	Customer Relations	5	4	3	2	1
200.	Specific Microcomputer Programs Please list:	5	4	3	2	1

201. List other workshop areas in which you would be interested.

202. What things do you like best about your present job assignment?

203. What things do you like least about your present job assignment?

204. Please make any additional comments you have here.

SUMMARY OF SAMPLE CLIMATE SURVEY CATEGORIES

XYZ Company

The Employee Survey consists of thirteen categories. Each category is listed below with brief questions to indicate the nature of the items in that category. Also listed are the survey item numbers that are presented in each category. Items in parentheses are considered secondary, rather than primary, to that category, though each item will be used in determining employee responses to that category.

Corporate Management's Leadership

How is corporate management viewed? Are they competent? fair? helpful? respected? Do they make good decisions?
16, 23, 26, 44, 68, 92, 104, (106), 121, (128), 130, 143

Department Management's Leadership

How is the management of the departments viewed? Are the managers competent? fair? helpful? respected? Do they make good decisions?
7, 41, 45, 47, 56, 58, 84, 91, 111, 113, 129, 139

Supervisory Effectiveness

How is the immediate supervisor viewed? Is that person competent? fair? helpful? respected? Are the right actions taken? Are good decisions made?
3, 10, 18, 20, 24, 30, 48, 49, 59, 60, 65, 70, 72, 78, (88), 100, 107, 109, 112, (115), (119), (122), 124, (134), 135, 137, (151)

Interpersonal and Interdepartmental Relationships

Is there cooperation among and within departments in the company? Is there a good attitude among departments? Are people friendly and helpful?
2, 6, 15, (18), (30), 108, 110, 131, 141, 142, 147

Productivity and Accountability

Are procedures appropriate? Is work distributed fairly? Are there adequate supplies and equipment available? What is the quality of work performed? How efficiently is time used? Are job objectives clear? Is employee work quality recognized? How?
5, 12, (21), (25), 28, 29, 32, 33, 34, 39, (40), 52, 55, 57, 62, 66, 74, 75, 80, (82), (100), (109), 114, 119, 123, 133, (135), 136, 146, 150, 161, 162

Communications

Is there sufficient communication? Is it accurate and timely? Are employee opinions valued? Is communication one-way or two-way? Are policies and procedures clearly communicated?
9, (19), (20), 27, 31, 36, 37, 50, 54, (59), 79, (105), 106, 115, 120, 126, 127, (129), (131), (133), 138, 145, 169

Employee Career Development

Are promotions available? Are the criteria for promotions appropriate, fairly administered, and communicated? Is job expansion encouraged?
(14), 25, (61), 83, 86, (101), 118, 122, (129), 132, 134, 140, 149, 152, 154

Training and Development

Are employees adequately trained and retrained? Is new employee orientation adequate? Are employees provided means to acquire new skills for job advancement?
17, 42, 61, 82, 89, 90, 101, 116, 144, 151

Job Satisfaction

Are employees satisfied with their jobs? Are their jobs rewarding? Are they able to apply their abilities?
1, 8, 11, (12), 13, 14, (15), (40), 46, 77, 125

Organizational Mission and Goals

What is the perceived image of XYZ Company, internally and within the community? Is its future bright? Are the goals of profitability and service both accepted?
4, (7), 21, 35, 38, 51, 63, 64, 67, 73, 85, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 128, 155

Working Conditions

Is XYZ Company a comfortable place in which to work, e.g., clean, appropriate facilities, noise level, etc.? Is there excessive pressure? Are employment practices equitable, e.g., minorities, men and women? Do employees wish to have a smoke-free working environment?
40, 43, 53, 71, 81, 87, 88, (93), 98, 99, 102, 103, 148, 157, 158, 159, 160, 163, 164, (177)

Employee Compensation

Is pay adequate? Is it determined fairly? Are pay and benefits comparable to other organizations? Is the benefit package understood? Is it adequate? Are specific benefits viewed positively?
19, 22, 69, 76, (103), (105), 117, 153, 156, 165, 166, 167, 168, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177

Training Options

In what areas would employees like to receive training?
178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200

Analysis and Presentation of Results

The outcome of any climate survey is the report of the results to the client ("feedback," in action research terms). Normally, this process includes the computation of means or percentages.

If means are computed, standard deviations are usually determined as well to give an indication of the dispersion of the results. Cutoffs should be used to identify the top and bottom half dozen items. It is difficult for an organization to work on change in more than a few areas at a time. Identifying more than a few weaknesses can destroy morale without attending hope of correcting the situation. Experience indicates that strength items are usually those at or exceeding 4.0 (on a 5-point scale), and weaknesses are those at or below 3.0. Results like this can be presented by item or by category.

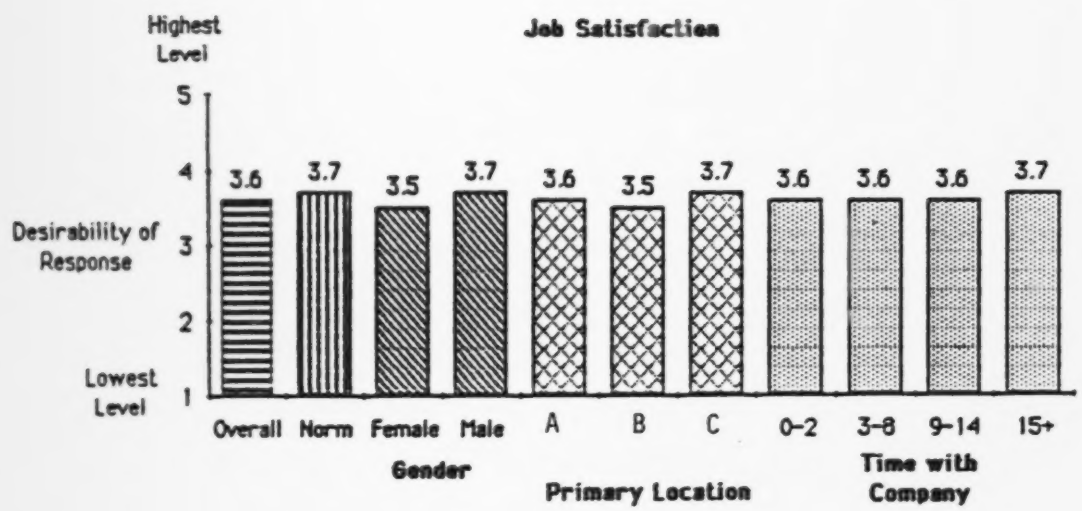
The difficulty with means is that a 3.0 can represent a lot of "3" responses or an equal number of "2" and "4" responses, but the interpretation would be very different. A standard deviation can identify spread, but it is a technical piece of information not easily used by non-statisticians.

Percentages tend to be understood better by novices, but they may be more cumbersome with which to work. When percentages are used, a separate percentage should be calculated for each response for each item. Reviewing these results can be rather overwhelming. To compensate, it is sometimes desirable to combine the two, by first determining the means and then reporting the means, standard deviations, and percents for the high and low items.

Because people tend to be overwhelmed by numbers, results can often be fed back best into the organization through the use of visuals. Graphs can quickly and easily identify where the major strengths and weaknesses are within an organization.

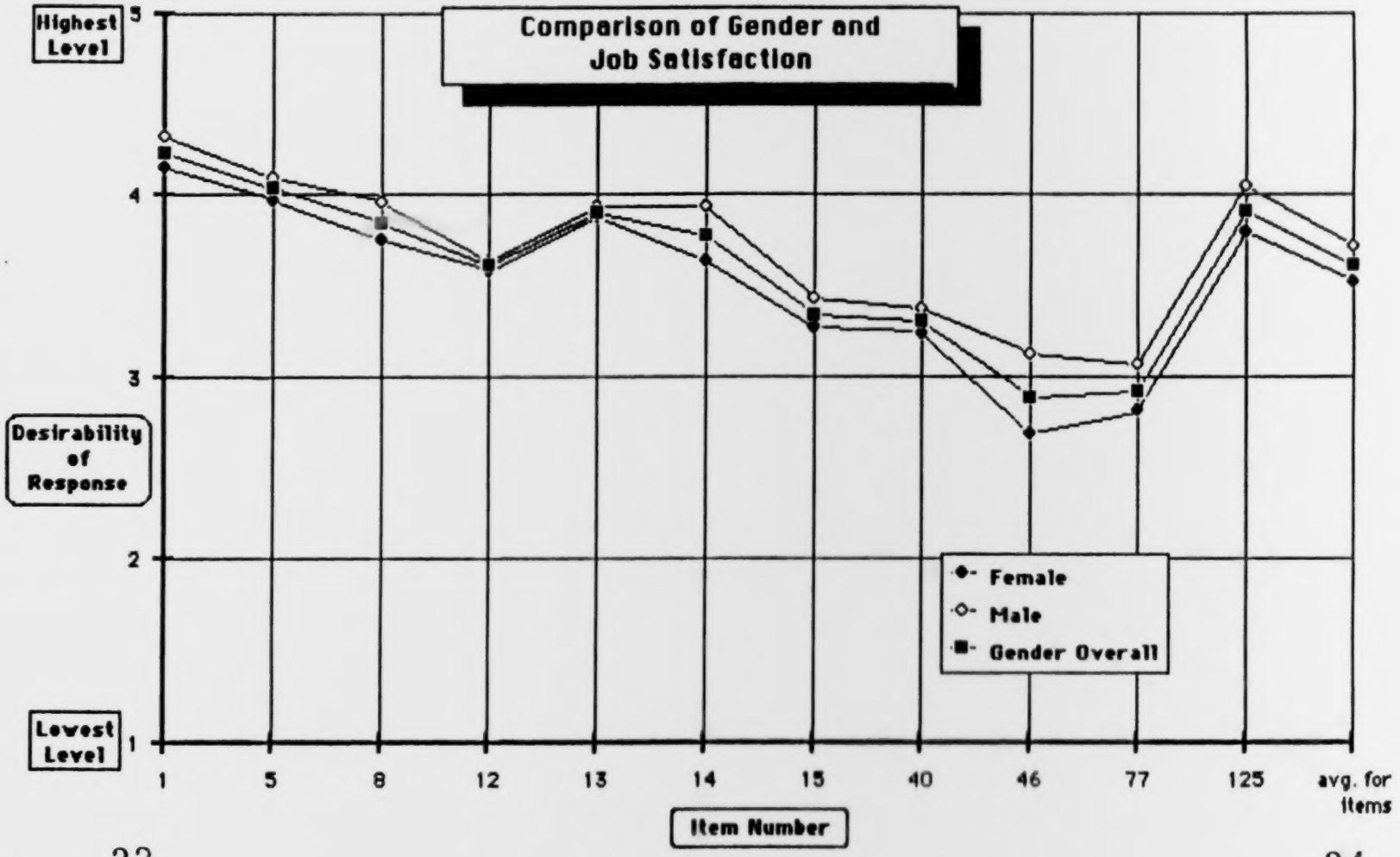
On the pages that follow are samples of the kinds of graphs that have actually been used to provide feedback for an organization using the kind of climate survey incorporated into this paper. The identity of the client organization has not been revealed.

Job Satisfaction
Highest Level
5
4
3
2
1
Lowest Level
Desirability of Response
3.6
3.7
3.4
3.6
3.6
3.6
3.7
3.8
4
3.7
Overall
Norm
3-5
6-7
8-10
11-13
14-16
17-19
20+
?
Grade Level


Job Satisfaction
Highest Level
5
4
3
2
1
Lowest Level
Desirability of Response
3.6
3.7
3.5
3.7
3.6
3.5
3.7
3.6
3.6
3.6
3.7
Overall
Norm
Female
Male
A
B
C
0-2
3-8
9-14
15+
Gender
Primary Location
Time with Company

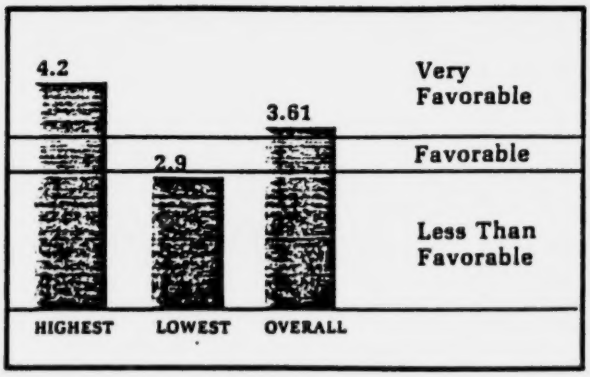
JOB SATISFACTION

GENDER	ITEM 1	ITEM 5	ITEM 8	ITEM 12	ITEM 13	ITEM 14	ITEM 15	ITEM 40	ITEM 46	ITEM 77	ITEM 125	THE AVERAGE FOR THIS SET OF ITEMS
FEMALE												
MEAN	4.15	3.97	3.75	3.68	3.88	3.64	3.27	3.24	2.89	2.81	3.79	3.52
STDEV	.71	.86	1.14	1.09	.92	1.07	1.09	1.15	1.06	.97	1.03	.53
VALIDN	418	416	418	419	418	418	415	420	420	418	419	421
MALE												
MEAN	4.32	4.09	3.96	3.63	3.93	3.93	3.43	3.37	3.12	3.06	4.05	3.72
STDEV	.70	.84	1.03	1.00	.92	1.01	.94	1.00	1.03	.97	.80	.52
VALIDN	340	339	339	339	340	341	338	337	336	336	340	341
TOTAL												
MEAN	4.23	4.03	3.84	3.61	3.90	3.77	3.34	3.30	2.88	2.92	3.91	3.61
STDEV	.71	.85	1.10	1.05	.92	1.05	1.03	1.08	1.07	.98	.94	.54
VALIDN	758	755	757	758	758	759	753	757	756	754	759	762


Comparison of Gender and Job Satisfaction
Highest Level
Lowest Level
Desirability of Response
5
4
3
2
1
Female
Male
Gender Overall
1
5
8
12
13
14
15
40
46
77
125
avg. for items
Item Number

JOB SATISFACTION

(Taken from a report distributed to all employees in the organization)



Questions Covered

Are employees satisfied with their jobs? Are their jobs rewarding? Are they able to apply their abilities?

Highest Rated Area

I am doing something really worthwhile on my job. (4.2)
90% Agree; 3% Disagree; 6% Undecided; 1% No Response

I often think my job contributes little to the company. (4.0)
8% Agree; 84% Disagree; 7% Undecided; 1% No Response

Lowest Rated Area

Morale in the company is high. (2.9)
34% Agree; 36% Disagree; 30% Undecided; 1% No Response

Many employees here have poor attitudes toward their job. (2.9)
42% Agree; 36% Disagree; 21% Undecided; 1% No Response

Overall

The Overall Rating for this category was 3.61.

Significant Demographic Data:

Gender

Men are generally more satisfied with their jobs at XYZ than are women. The major difference by gender is the perception held by women that employees have poor attitudes toward their jobs, and that women have little opportunity to use their abilities in their jobs.

Grade Level

The highest levels of job satisfaction were reported by the following grade levels: 20 and above (4.0), 17-19 (3.8), 14-16 (3.7), and those employees who do not know their grade level (3.7).

The lowest level of job satisfaction was felt by employees in grade levels 3-5 (3.4).

Employees in higher grade levels are more likely to feel that their abilities are used in their present job and that their job has variety.

Employees in lower grade levels are more likely to perceive their jobs to be more dull and monotonous, to observe poor attitudes on the part of other employees, and to perceive the existence of cliques creating an unfriendly atmosphere.

Time With the Company

Employees with 15 or more years of service rate this category slightly higher than other employees.

Employees with a long history of employment with the company are more highly committed to staying with the company.

Employees with less than 2 years of service are more likely to rate company morale slightly higher.

Employees with 9-14 years of service are more likely to rate company morale slightly lower.

Norm Comparisons

XYZ's Overall Rating of 3.61 is slightly below the norm of 3.7.

Survey Summary
Question #178

What things do you like best about your present job assignment?

Number of Responses	Categories
262	Variety
104	My co-workers
98	Kind of work I do
96	Challenge
86	Responsibility
72	My supervisor(s)
56	Freedom
51	Independence
42	Contact with other people
40	Interaction with other Work Groups
40	Learning new things
34	Working conditions
30	Interesting
30	Making a contribution
29	Positive work relationships
28	Flexibility
24	Atmosphere
22	Supervision is low
20	Feeling of accomplishment
20	I like helping others
20	The hours
19	I'm busy
17	I like the company
17	Creativity is encouraged
17	Rewarding
15	Recognition is given
14	Contact with people outside the company
13	Decision-making opportunities
13	Enjoyable
13	Position provides experience
13	Travel
12	Contact with cooperatives
11	Customer contact
11	I know the job
10	Growth in the position
8	Equipment that is available for use
8	Importance of the position
8	Pay
8	Respect
6	Advancement
6	I like my subordinates
5	Sense of team effort
4	Accountability
4	Educational benefits
4	Influential
4	Visibility
3	Authority
3	Everything
3	I have a job
3	Location from home
1	Benefits

Survey Sub-summary
Question #178
What things do you like best about your present job assignment?

Feelings about Position

Number of Responses	Categories
40	Learning new things
30	Making a contribution
24	Atmosphere
20	Feeling of accomplishment
17	Rewarding
15	Recognition is given
13	Enjoyable
13	Position provides experience
10	Growth in the position
8	Respect
3	Everything
3	I have a job

The People

Number of Responses	Categories
104	My co-workers
72	My supervisor(s)
42	Contact with other people
40	Interaction with other work groups
29	Positive work relationships
22	Supervision is low
14	Contact with people outside the company
12	Contact with cooperatives
11	Customer contact
6	I like my subordinates
5	Sense of team effort

Aspects of the Position

Number of Responses	Categories
262	Variety
98	Kind of work I do
96	Challenge
86	Responsibility
56	Freedom
51	Independence
34	Working conditions
30	Interesting
28	Flexibility
20	I like helping others
20	The hours
19	I'm busy
17	I like the company
17	Creativity is encouraged
13	Decision-making opportunities
13	Travel
11	I know the job
8	Equipment that is available for use
8	Importance of the position
8	Pay
6	Advancement
4	Accountability
4	Educational benefits
4	Influential
4	Visibility
3	Authority
3	Location from home
1	Benefits

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